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125 Booming care

Family-owned Pinedale Center adds new rooms with plans for more

By **MARTIN L. CAHN**
C-1 (Camden, S.C.) senior editor

There's no escaping the reality -- America's oldest citizens are also the fastest growing segment of the population. In response, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, seven of the 10 fastest growing jobs through 2014 will be in health care. Of the top 30, 17 are expected to be in health care.

Some studies show that baby boomers are the fastest growing group of citizens -- those born between 1946 and 1964 and between World War II and the Vietnam War. Many of those men and women are nearing their late 50s or early 60s. Not quite retirement age, not yet in need of nursing homes.

Other studies show it's their parents -- the oldest Americans -- who are driving the push for more senior-focused services. And that's where assisted living centers come in.

There are four such businesses in Kershaw County: Morningside of Camden, Pinedale Residential Center, Springdale HealthCare Center and Kershaw County Medical Center's A. Sam Karesh Long-Term Care Center. Each has plans for expansions, recognizing the needs of older Americans now -- and the boomers still to come.

Three of those centers are owned by a public hospital or by large companies, but only one is privately held. At Pinedale Residential Center on Hermitage Pond Road, taking care of others is all in the family.

According to Phillip Hudson Jr., the third generation to help

run a long-term assisted living facility, it all started in Conway 23 years ago.

"My uncle, Dale, opened that first one with his father after his grandmother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's," said Hudson. "Then he bought one in Georgetown and opened this one in Camden in 1988."

Dale Hudson -- who is the author of several true crime novels, including "Die, Grandpa, Die" about the Christopher Pittman case -- has since divested himself of the facility in Conway and sold his interest in Pinedale to his brother, Phil, a few years ago. Phillip Hudson graduated from the University of South Carolina in December and started assisting his father in January.

"My father decided to stay here -- he was born and raised

here -- and he knows a lot of the people," said Hudson, "and Mom's the owner of Jet Janitorial & Pool Supply Company."

Currently, Pinedale has 35 rooms but plans to add eight more, four on each end of the existing building.

"They will be apartment-style, including a living room, small kitchen with microwave and refrigerator and a bathroom where you just walk in to the shower," said Hudson. "We just added a new front entrance, which is just about done, with a new gable to drive under and a new handicapped ramp."

Hudson said once the new rooms are operating and filled, he and his father may take a look at the land in back of the building and build another wing with yet another eight rooms.

"It's a rural setting, real quiet. You go on the back porch and there's nothing there but a huge field and pine trees. It's a really nice view. A lot of our residents go back there and just sit in the rocking chairs," said Hudson.

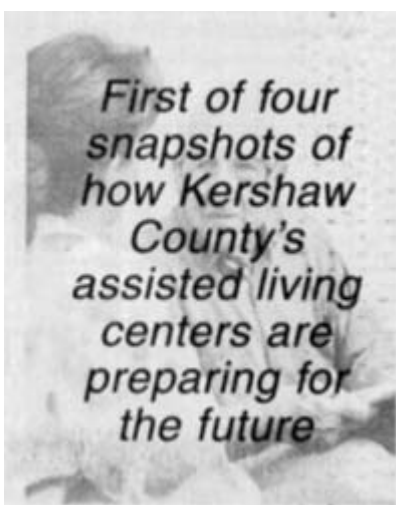
With the new construction project, Hudson said they will also be installing a new sprinkler system through the whole building and upgrading the entire fire alarm system.

Like many assisted living centers, Hudson said Pinedale has its own beauty salon and provides transportation for its residents to doctors' offices and other health care facilities. It also has an activities director.

"We have a bingo night, and a church group comes out every Tuesday," he said.

A Mary Kay cosmetics representative visits once a month, too, said Hudson, to do facials and nails at no charge to the patients.

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"We worked out a deal with them. Families are invited to come out, so they might order something. It's a charitable thing for them to do in return for the exposure," Hudson said.

In addition, Pinedale has its own pharmacy and offers med-

ical supplies.

"We have independent care for those seniors who desire the ease of living here but don't need lots of help," said Hudson. "We have 24-hour assisted care for those who need that."

Pinedale can also take on residents with dementia and other mental impairments, including short-term memory loss. Hudson's quick to point out, however, it cannot accept Alzheimer's patients.

"We also offer respite care, which is available to adults who need temporary care from a weekend to a month recovering from an illness or to relieve the caregiver," said Hudson.

Whatever the need, Hudson said the aim is to make people feel at home -- like part of the family.

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